

## Chapter 55. Respiratory Therapists and Respiratory Therapy Technicians

### Subchapter A. General Provisions

#### §5501. Scope of Chapter

A. The rules of this Chapter govern the practice of respiratory care in the state of Louisiana.

**AUTHORITY NOTE:** Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1270(B)(6) and R.S. 37:3351-3361.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 12:767 (November 1986), amended by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 25:2223 (November 1999).

#### §5503. General Definitions

A. As used in this Chapter, unless the context clearly states otherwise, the following terms and phrases shall have the meanings specified.

**Applicant**•a person who has applied to the board for licensure as a licensed registered respiratory therapist or a licensed certified respiratory therapist.

**Board**•the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners.

**Certified Respiratory Therapist**•also known as Certified Respiratory Therapy Technician, prior to July 1, 1999, means one who has successfully completed the entry level examination or its successor administered by the National Board for Respiratory Care.

**Course of Study**•an accredited, recognized or approved program which leads to a degree or certification of completion within four years, enabling a student to be eligible for registry or certification in respiratory care.

**Good Moral Character**•as applied to an applicant, means that an applicant has not, prior to or during the pendency of an application to the board, been guilty of any act, omission, condition or circumstance which would provide legal cause under R.S. 37:3358 for the denial, suspension or revocation of respiratory care licensure; the applicant has not, prior to or in connection with his application, made any representation to the board, knowingly or unknowingly, which is in fact false or misleading as to material fact or omits to state any fact or matter that is material to the application; and the applicant has not made any representation or failed to make a representation or engaged in any act or omission which is false, deceptive, fraudulent or misleading in achieving or obtaining any of the qualifications for a license required by Subpart 2 of these rules.

**License**•the lawful authority of a registered respiratory therapist or a certified respiratory therapist to engage in the health specialty of respiratory therapy in the state of Louisiana, as evidenced by a license duly issued by and under the official seal of the board.

**Licensed Respiratory Therapist**•a person who is licensed by the board and has the lawful authority to engage in the practice of respiratory care in the state of Louisiana, only under the qualified medical direction and supervision of a licensed physician, as evidenced by certificate duly issued by and under the official seal of the board. The term "licensed respiratory therapist" shall signify both certified respiratory therapist and registered respiratory therapist.

**Medical Gases**•gases commonly used in a respiratory care department in the calibration of respiratory care equipment (nitrogen, oxygen, compressed air and carbon dioxide), in the diagnostic evaluation of diseases (carbon monoxide, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, helium and oxygen) and in the therapeutic management of diseases (nitrogen, carbon dioxide, helium, oxygen and compressed air).

**National Board for Respiratory Care**•the official credentialing board of the profession or its successor.

**Physician**•a person who is currently licensed by the board to practice medicine in the state of Louisiana.

**Registered Respiratory Therapist**•one who has successfully completed the Advanced Practitioner Examination or its successor administered by the National Board for Respiratory Care.

**Respiratory Care**•the allied health specialty practiced under the direction, supervision and approval of a licensed physician involving the treatment, testing, monitoring, and care of persons with deficiencies and abnormalities of the cardiopulmonary system. Such therapy includes, but is not limited to, the following activities conducted upon written prescription or verbal order of a physician and under his supervision:

- a. application and monitoring of oxygen, ventilatory therapy, bronchial hygiene therapy, cardiopulmonary rehabilitation and resuscitation;
- b. insertion and care of airways as ordered by a physician;
- c. institution of any type of physiologic monitoring applicable to respiratory care;
- d. administration of drugs and medications commonly used in respiratory care that have been prescribed by a physician to be administered by qualified respiratory care personnel;
- e. initiation of treatment changes and testing techniques required for the implementation of respiratory care protocols as directed by a physician;
- f. administration of medical gases and environmental control systems and their apparatus;
- g. administration of humidity and aerosol therapy;
- h. application of chest pulmonary therapy;
- i. the institution of known and physician-approved patient driven protocols relating to respiratory care under physician approval in emergency situations in the absence of immediate direction by a physician;

j. application of specific procedures and diagnostic testing as ordered by the physician to assist in diagnosis, monitoring, treatment, and research, including those procedures required and directed by the physician for the drawing of blood samples to determine acid-base status and blood gas values, the collection of sputum for analysis of body fluids, the measurement of cardiopulmonary functions as commonly performed in respiratory therapy, and the starting of intravenous lines for the purpose of administering fluids as pertinent to the practice of respiratory care under the supervision of a licensed physician;

k. supervision of other respiratory therapy personnel; and

l. transcription and implementation of the written and verbal orders of a physician.

*Respiratory Therapy Practice Act or the Act*• Acts 1985, Number 408, as amended, R.S. 37:3351-3361.

*United States Government*• any department, agency or bureau of the United States Armed Forces or Veterans Administration.

B. Respiratory care shall also include teaching patient and family respiratory care procedures as part of a patient's ongoing program and consultation services or for health, educational, and community agencies under the order of a licensed physician.

C. Masculine terms wherever used in this Chapter shall also be deemed to include the feminine.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1270(B)(6) and R.S. 37:3351-3361.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 12:767 (November 1986), amended by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 19:747 (June 1993), LR 25:2223 (November 1999).

Subchapter B. Unauthorized Practice, Exemptions, and Prohibitions

#### §5505. Unauthorized Practice

A. No person shall engage in the practice of respiratory care in the state of Louisiana unless he has in his possession a current license or temporary license duly issued by the board under Subpart 2 of these Rules.

B. No person shall hold himself out to the public, an individual patient, a physician, dentist or podiatrist, or to any insurer or indemnity company or association or governmental authority as a registered respiratory therapist or certified respiratory therapist, nor shall he directly or indirectly identify or designate himself as a respiratory therapist or licensed respiratory therapist, nor use in connection with his name the letters "CRT" (Certified Respiratory Therapist), "RRT" (Registered Respiratory Therapist), or any other words, letters, abbreviations, insignia, or signs tending to indicate or imply that the person is a registered respiratory therapist or a certified respiratory therapist or that the services provided by such person constitute respiratory care, unless such person possesses a current license or temporary license duly issued by the board under Subpart 2 of these Rules.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1270(B)(6) and R.S. 37:3351-3361.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 12:767 (November 1986), amended by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 25:2224 (November 1999).

#### §5507. Exemptions

A. The prohibitions of §5505 of this Chapter shall not apply to a person employed exclusively by, or at an institution operated by the United States Government when acting within the course and scope of such employment.

B. The prohibitions of §5505 of this Chapter shall not apply to a person acting under and within the scope of a license issued by another licensing agency of the state of Louisiana.

C. The prohibitions of §5505 of this Chapter shall not apply to a person pursuing a "course of study" leading to registry or certification in respiratory care at an institution whose program is accredited, recognized or approved by an agency recognized by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs and approved by the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners and who is designated by a title which clearly indicates his status as a student.

D. The prohibitions of §5507 of this Chapter shall not apply to a person not licensed as a respiratory therapist or in accordance with the provisions of these rules but who may be employed in a pulmonary laboratory or physician's office to administer treatment confined to that laboratory or office under the direction and immediate supervision of a licensed physician.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1270(B)(6) and R.S. 37:3351-3361.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 12:767 (November 1986), amended, by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 25:2224 (November 1999).

#### §5509. Prohibitions

A. A licensed respiratory therapist shall not:

1. undertake to perform or actually perform any activities as described in §5503, definition or "Respiratory care," except under the written prescription or verbal order of a physician and under his supervision;

2. administer any drugs or medications except as dispensed by a pharmacist and prescribed by a physician or dispensed by a physician; or

3. perform any surgical incisions.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1270(B)(6) and R.S. 37:3351-3361.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 12:767 (November 1986), amended by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 25:2224 (November 1999).

Subchapter C. Supervision of Students

§5511. Scope of Subchapter

A. The Rules of this Subchapter prescribe certain restrictions on and requirements for supervision of students pursuing a "course of study" as that term is defined in this Chapter.

**AUTHORITY NOTE:** Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1270(B)(6) and R.S. 37:3351-3361.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 12:767 (November 1986), repromulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 25:2224 (November 1999).

§5515. Supervision of Student

A. A person pursuant to a "course of study" leading to registry or certification in respiratory care shall engage in the practice of respiratory care only under the supervision of a licensed respiratory therapist or a physician who actively practices respiratory care, as provided in this Section.

B. A licensed respiratory therapist or a physician who undertakes to supervise a student shall:

1. undertake to concurrently supervise not more than four students;
2. personally evaluate every patient prior to the provision of any respiratory care treatment or procedure by a student;
3. assign to a student only such respiratory care measures, treatments, procedures and functions as such licensed respiratory therapist or physician has documented that the student by education and training is capable of performing safely and effectively;
4. provide continuous and immediate on-premises direction to and supervision of a student and be readily available at all times to provide advice, instruction, and assistance to the student and to the patient during respiratory care treatment given by a student;
5. not permit a student to perform any invasive procedure or any life-sustaining or critical respiratory care, including therapeutic, diagnostic or palliative procedures, except under the direct and immediate supervision, and in the physical presence of, the supervising therapist and/or physician; and
6. provide and perform periodic evaluation of every patient administered to by a student and make modifications and adjustments in the patient's respiratory care treatment plan, including those portions of the treatment plan assigned to the student.

**AUTHORITY NOTE:** Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1270(B)(6) and R.S. 37:3351-3361.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 12:767 (November 1986), amended by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 19:748 (June 1993), LR 25:2224 (November 1999).

Subchapter D. Grounds for Administrative Action

§5517. Causes for Administrative Action

A. The board may refuse to issue or renew, or may suspend, revoke or impose probationary conditions and restrictions on the license or temporary license of any registered respiratory therapist or certified respiratory therapist, if the licensee or applicant for license has been guilty of unprofessional conduct which has endangered or is likely to endanger the health, welfare, or safety of the public.

**AUTHORITY NOTE:** Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1270(B)(6) and R.S. 37:3351-3361.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 12:767 (November 1986), amended by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 17:886 (September 1991), LR 25:2225 (November 1999).

§5519. Causes for Action; Definitions; Unprofessional Conduct

A. As used herein and in R.S. 37:3358, "unprofessional conduct" by a registered respiratory therapist or a certified respiratory therapist shall mean:

1. conviction of a crime or entry of a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to a criminal charge constituting a felony under the laws of the state of Louisiana, of the United States or of the state in which such conviction or plea was entered;
2. conviction of a crime or entry of a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to any criminal charge arising out of or in connection with the practice of respiratory care;
3. perjury, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation or concealment of material facts in obtaining a license to practice respiratory care;
4. providing false testimony before the board or providing false sworn information to the board;
5. habitual or recurring abuse of drugs, including alcohol, which affect the central nervous system and which are capable of inducing physiological or psychological dependence;
6. solicitation of patients or self-promotion through advertising or communication, public or private, which is fraudulent, false, deceptive or misleading;

7. making or submitting false, deceptive or unfounded claims, reports or opinions to any patient, insurance company or indemnity association, company, individual, or governmental authority for the purpose of obtaining anything of economic value;
8. cognitive or clinical incompetence;
9. continuing or recurring practice which fails to satisfy the prevailing and usually accepted standards of respiratory care practice in this state;
10. knowingly performing any act which in any way assists an unlicensed person to practice respiratory care, or having professional connection with or lending one's name to an illegal practitioner;
11. paying or giving anything of economic value to another person, firm or corporation to induce the referral of patients to the registered respiratory therapist or certified respiratory therapist;
12. interdiction by due process of law;
13. inability to practice respiratory care with reasonable competence, skill or safety to patients because of mental or physical illness, condition or deficiency, including but not limited to deterioration through the aging process and excessive use or abuse of drugs, including alcohol;
14. refusal to submit to examination and inquiry by an examining committee of physicians appointed by the board to inquire into the licensee's physical and/or mental fitness and ability to practice respiratory care with reasonable skill or safety to patients;
15. practicing or otherwise engaging in any conduct or functions beyond the scope of respiratory care as defined by the Act or these rules;
16. the refusal of the licensing authority of another state to issue or renew a license, permit, or certificate to practice respiratory care in that state or the revocation, suspension or other restriction imposed on a license, permit, or certificate issued by such licensing authority which prevents, restricts or conditions practice in that state, or the surrender of a license, permit or certificate issued by another state when criminal or administrative charges are pending or threatened against the holder of such license, permit or certificate;
17. violation of the code of ethics adopted and published by the American Association for Respiratory Care;
18. demonstrating a lack of "good moral character" as defined in §5503.A; or
19. violation of any rules and regulations of the board, or any provisions of the Act, as amended, R.S. 37:3351-3361.

B. Denial, refusal to renew, suspension, revocation, or imposition of probationary conditions upon a licensee may be ordered by the board in a decision made after a hearing in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act and the applicable rules and regulations of the board. One year after the date of the revocation of a license, application may be made to the board for reinstatement. The board shall have discretion to accept or reject an application for reinstatement but shall hold a hearing to consider such reinstatement.

**AUTHORITY NOTE:** Promulgated in accordance with R.S.-37:1270(B)(6) and R.S. 37:3351-3361.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 12:767 (November 1986), amended by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 17:886 (September 1991), LR 25:2225 (November 1999).